

The Musical World.

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June 1, 1878.

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The Theatre:

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NEW SONG.—"REPENTANCE." Words by E. B. MANNING. Price 3s. Composed by F. VON LESEN. London: DUNCAN DAVISON & Co., 244, Regent Street, W.

COVENT GARDEN PROMENADE CONCERTS.

Messrs A. and S. Gatti began their annual series of Promenade Concerts on Saturday night at Covent Garden Theatre, where a crowded audience assembled. These entertainments, which of old, under the sway of the well-remembered Louis Jullien, used to commence about November and last until the preparations for the Christmas pantomime were at hand, have of recent years begun in midsummer. They are certainly a boon to those lovers of music in its varied phases—from symphony and concerto to characteristic dance music, from operatic *scena* and air to ordinary song and ballad—who during that period of the year when all, occupations and means permitting, too willingly emigrate for a time, in search of “fresh fields and pastures new,” are compelled to remain in London. They, moreover, present other temptations to mere “*flâneurs*,” who take pleasure in any kind of busy scene where they may jostle against numbers of their fellows, especially under such cheerful conditions as are invariably presented to them by the Messrs Gatti. Nor can we overlook the many people from the country, to say nothing about foreigners, who are induced to visit the great capital at this sultry epoch. We had an amalgamation of all these on Saturday, and a truly busy, animated sight it was. The decorations by Mr Julian Hicks and the arrangements before and behind the spacious orchestra were much the same in their general aspect as we have been accustomed to, and there was nothing to detract from the proverbial gaiety attached to these promoters of public amusement.

Our chief business, however, is with the musical scheme provided by the directors; and this, it must be admitted, looks more than commonly promising. First there is an orchestra comprising 16 first violins, 12 second violins, 8 violas, 8 violoncellos, and 10 double basses—in all 54 stringed instrument players, with many of the most practised artists in the ranks. The necessary complement of “wood, brass, and percussion”—flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, trombones, cornet, ophicleide, drums, &c.—are to match, and, taken together, make up a band of some 80 performers—and, as the result showed, of thorough efficiency. The leading violin (or “*chef d'attaque*,” as the French style him) is, as usual, Mr A. Burnett, and a better could hardly have been chosen. The conductor is Mr Arthur Sullivan, who for the first time, we believe, has assumed such an office at entertainments of the kind. That our gifted musician, who has done so much to prove himself a worthy representative of English art, will strive his utmost to impart a legitimately musical tone to the present series of concerts is beyond dispute. This, in fact, is already declared by the announcement that on each successive Monday a symphony by Beethoven is to be performed, beginning (to-night) with No. 1, in C, and ending with No. 8, in F. The Choral Symphony (No. 9) being, for more reasons than one, hardly practicable in the circumstances, is with good judgment discarded. On each Wednesday, moreover, there is to be a “classical night,” so termed. That on these special occasions Mr Sullivan, with his extensive knowledge of the works of great masters, will make the selections as varied and as interesting as lies in his power may be taken for granted. In such divisions of the programmes as are given up to dance music he will enjoy the co-operation of M. Olivier Metra, conductor of the *Bals Masqués* at the Paris Grand Opera, who has of late won considerable recognition, and, as few will deny, on justifiable grounds.

The concert on Saturday offered a fair example of what is to be expected on ordinary occasions in the course of the series. Mr Sullivan, on reaching the conductor's desk, was honoured by the cordial greeting due to the position he enjoys among our native artists. The man who has given us not only *Cox and Box*, the *Contrabandista*, *Trial by Jury*, the *Sorcerer*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*, each in its way unsurpassed, but also the *Tempest* music, *Kenilworth*, the Symphony in E minor, the overture, *In Memoriam*, the Anthem to commemorate the recovery of the Prince of Wales, and, last not least, such an oratorio as the *Light of the World*, is no common labourer in the field of art, and merits all the distinction that may be conferred upon him. After the National Anthem, the concert began with a performance of Weber's magnificent overture to *Oberon* that at once satisfied every amateur as to the excellence of the orchestra, not merely with regard to its general effect, but with regard to the requisite efficiency of all its component parts. Equally noticeable, and for the same reasons, was the execution of Rossini's perennial over-

ture to *Guillaume Tell*. We have seldom heard the introductory movement for violoncellos or the exquisite *andante*, suggested by the “*Jodel*,” about which Mendelssohn, not over-lavish of his praise, was wont to say, in his own expressive English, “How beautifully Rossini has *found* that!” delivered with more taste and finish. That the storm and the martial *finale* brought out to striking advantage the resources of such an orchestra, guided by so expert a conductor, may be readily imagined. There was also a pianoforte concerto in the first part—Mendelssohn's well-known No. 1, in G minor (his “*Munich Concerto*,” as he used to call it, having first publicly performed it himself in the Bavarian capital). Miss Josephine Lawrence was the pianist; and we congratulate her on the progress she has made. Some years ago she studied under Mdme Arabella Goddard, who brought her out. Her next instructor was our highly-esteemed English pianist, Mr Franklin Taylor. That she learned much worth learning from both is evident in the increased command she has obtained over the key-board. She played with remarkable spirit and brilliancy on Saturday night. Miss Lawrence has yet something to achieve in order to render her execution of the first and most difficult part of Mendelssohn's concerto everything that could be desired; but her musical tone and genuine expression in the slow movement, her elastic touch and facile manipulation in the *finale*, which, with commendable discretion, she took at a less rapid pace than is frequently adopted, demand unqualified recognition. The unanimous applause that followed must have convinced Miss Lawrence that she had given such entire satisfaction to her hearers as to encourage her in pursuing her studies with continued zeal and perseverance. As everybody is “recalled” after everything at these concerts, it is scarcely worth referring to this particular mark of distinction bestowed on the young artist. The vigorous, self-asserting prelude to the third act of Wagner's *Lohengrin* was the other orchestral piece in Part I. On the whole we thought it rather hurriedly played; at any rate it produced less effect than is customary. The rest of this part of the programme was devoted to vocal solos. Among the singers was Mdle Alma Verdini, an American lady, as we understand, born of Italian parents. Mdle Verdini has a pure soprano voice, agreeable in quality and flexible as well—a “*soprano sfogato*,” as the conventional phrase is. Prepossessing in appearance, she at once gained the sympathies of the audience (which by this time had densely thronged the arena). Nevertheless, her delivery of the opening movement, “*Ah! fors'è lui*,” in the *cavatina* from Verdi's *Traviata*, was of unequal merit. She was nervous at the outset, but in the *cabaletta*, “*Sempre libera*,” created a much more favourable impression. Miss Anna Williams pleased greatly, as she rarely fails to do, in a ballad by Mr F. Cowen and the always popular “*Robin Adair*,” which could hardly have been given with more appropriate feeling. Mr Edward Lloyd carried the whole audience with him in Frederick Clay's pretty ballad from *Lalla Rookh*, “*I'll sing thee songs of Araby*,” and Mr Arthur Sullivan's plaintive “*Once again*,” in both of which he was encoored. In lieu, however, of singing “*Once again*,” again he substituted another song from the same pen, “*Oh, take this flower, my love*,” which met with no less favour, and was accompanied on the piano by the composer.

We must be brief in our remarks upon the second part of the concert, which began with a very showy selection from Mr Sullivan's comic opera, *The Sorcerer*, for full orchestra, associated with the band of the Coldstream Guards, under the able direction of Mr Fred Godfrey. Among the themes comprised in this selection were the Bridesmaids' chorus; Aline's song, “*Oh, happy young heart*,” the tender apostrophe of Constance, “*When he is here I sigh with pleasure*,” the quintet, “*I rejoice that it's decided*,” the chorus, “*Now to the banquet we press*”—which forms part both of the first and last finales, &c. The whole is put together by Mr George Jacobi (of the Alhambra) with ingenuity and happy effect, and the melodies are so frank and telling that the fantasia sounds bright and catching from end to end. In the famous “*valse*” by Venezano, precursor of many similar things, which the late Mdme Gassier was the first to introduce to the English public, Mdle Alma Verdini was far more successful than in Verdi's air, executing her passages with great fluency and winning applause in proportion. Mr Lloyd received another unanimous encore in the elder Braham's once famous nautical song, “*The Anchor's Weighed*,” substituting for it Balfe's

"Come into the garden, Maud," which retains all its popularity. Mr Maybrick (fortunate composer of "Nancy Lee,") who in the first part had introduced his own song, "The Tar's Farewell" (signed "Stephen Adams"), sang Dr Boyce's "Hearts of Oak" in the second, so that we had nautical songs and to spare (and yet not one of Dibdin's). An instrumental feature in this second part of the concert was the admirable performance on the cornet, by Mr Howard Reynolds, of Schubert's familiar "Serenade." A valse by M. Métra, who being too indisposed to take his place at the conductor's desk was replaced by that clever musician, Mr Alfred Cellier; the march from Gounod's *Reine de Saba*, in which the Coldstream band took part; and Hertel's galop "Flick and Flock," brought the performances to a conclusion. The Promenade Concerts have thus begun auspiciously, and if carried on with the same spirit may reasonably count upon success.—*Times*.

On Monday evening the first of the Beethoven symphonies was given, Mmes Rose Hersee and Antoinette Sterling, two of our most deservedly popular artists, being added to the list of singers. The first "Classical Night" was held on Wednesday, the principal feature in Part I. being the B flat Symphony of Schumann. More about this in our next.

HENRY IRVING.

(From "The Theatre.")

The most popular tragedian of our time lives in a busy West-end thoroughfare, within easy distance of club-land. His favourite room, however, is so near the top of the house that the roar of the traffic is almost lost. You at once feel that to give a full description of this room and its contents more than one visit is needed. The light of day, subdued by stained-glass windows, reveals a scene of confusion at which a lover of order would hold up his hands in consternation, but which is not without a certain charm of its own. The open piano, the chairs, the tables, the sofa, and other furniture appear to have been dropped through the roof by chance; volumes from the many bookshelves and racks about the room lie on the floor; a tiger-skin rug has been thrown carelessly on one side, and boxes of cigars are to be seen in close proximity to old china, the most dignified of antique chairs, and portfolios of rare engravings. Then, as though to show that histrionic distinction is not without its drawbacks, several MSS. and letters lie on a table near—not in—the centre of the room. The books are indicative of a healthy and catholic taste. There are disquisitions on art in all its forms, histories of nations and of costume, old and recent editions of Shakspeare and other dramatists, works of criticism, books of reference, biographies and poems. Some of the pictures on the delicately-coloured walls have a peculiar value; this portrait of Signor Rossi was sent by himself to "Famico Irving," and that little picture of Othello in armour was drawn by Mr Tenniel in order to show how the Moor should appear in the second act. The well-known portrait of Charles Dickens in his later years is also before you. There are also a bust of Sir John Herschel, medallions of Charles Young and Emile Devrient, and what not. From the mantelpiece, which is richly decorated, a Louis Quinze clock makes itself heard. In this room, unless rumour is incorrect, Mr Irving sits until the small hours of the morning, sometimes in conversation over a cigar with a friend, but more frequently, we suspect, to think out a part or invent the innumerable details by which the conception he has formed of it may be realized.

In the words of a scholarly critic, Mr Irving is the most imaginative actor of our time, and it is to the operation of this faculty, joined to a rare mastery of the resources of histrionic art, that we must refer the thoroughness of his work, the fascination which even repulsive characters acquire in his hands, the breadth and vividness of his acting, and the peculiar influence he exercises upon an audience from almost the moment of his appearance on the scene. His mental vision goes beyond mere externals, penetrates far beneath the surface. He not only lays bare the chief springs of action in a character; the undercurrents of unspoken and impalpable thought are clearly indicated. In doing this, of course, he is materially aided by his acquirements as an actor, which include the results of careful observation. His action, the movement of his face, the tones of his voice, and his dress and by-play are at once remarkable in themselves and nicely adapted to the end he has in view. The art of the actor, however, is but seldom visible, and the impersonations which must have involved the deepest study are those which are the most successful in producing the effect of spontaneity. That his powers extend over a wide field there can be no doubt. In the expression of irony or pathos, sarcasm or tenderness, anguish or passion, grim humour or austere severity, he is equally at home.

For good proofs of his versatility you have only to contrast the scenes with Ophelia and the Queen in *Hamlet* with the last scene in the *Lyons Mail*; the quiet dignity and pathos of his Charles I. with the sardonic humour and terrible vindictiveness of his Louis XI., his murder scene in *Macbeth* with the grasp of high comedy which distinguishes his Richard III. The whole force of his mind, in fact, is evidently thrown into all he does. His acting, however, is not without drawbacks. In scenes of high passion or excitement he loses command over his voice, and consequently many of his words are lost.* Again, the individuality of his impersonations is lessened† by peculiarities of intonation and gesture and deportment; but on this point it is only fair to say that a great actor without strongly-marked mannerisms has not yet existed, and probably never will exist. Be that as it may, Mr Irving's shortcomings are insignificant when taken in conjunction with his merits. The word "genius" is too often misapplied to persons endowed with rare talents; but it may be affirmed without hesitation that genius of a high order belongs to the subject of this hasty sketch.

Mr Irving, according to a recently-published memoir, was placed in his twelfth year at a school near Lombard Street, and soon displayed considerable interest in everything dramatic, particularly in the recitals given at Christmas. Mr Creswick being present at a rehearsal, taught young Irving how to grasp a dagger. In his fifteenth year the boy entered the office of an East India merchant. But his heart was not in his work, and he joined a number of young men who met to get up dramatic entertainments. The applause he won determined him to seek fame and fortune on the stage, and after a probation of ten years he gained a footing in London.

DRURY LANE THEATRE.

The following report has just been presented to the renters by their committee:—

"Your committee have to report that the gross receipts, including the balance to June 30, 1877, of £2,900, amounted to £10,233. The total payments came to £7,392, leaving a balance of £2,841 in the hands of the bankers, subject to the payment of three cheques amounting to £32 drawn prior to, but which had not been presented on, June 30. The receipts comprised the sum of £6,500 from the lessee for the current year's rent ending the 18th inst., and the payments comprised the sums of £1,372 for four quarters' rent to the Duke of Bedford, of £792 rates and taxes, and £3,600 to the trustees of the new renters. The dividend this year amounted to £11 17s. 6d. against £12 10s. last year. Your committee regret the loss of the Italian Opera from the theatre, causing a fall in the value of the renters' shares, and the closing of the theatre during the summer months, resulting from the absence of the Italian Opera from the theatre for the seasons 1877-8. The value of your debentures has fallen from £135 to between £80 and £90 each. The debenture-holders' transferable admissions have still more disastrously fallen in value. With Italian Opera they were readily salable at £8 and £6 each, without it the admissions are unsalable even at £1. Your committee would strongly impress upon such of the debenture-holders who hold proprietary shares the importance of the proprietors' meetings. Their interests are so identified with these meetings that no opportunity should be lost when their property is at stake. Your committee regret that in common with almost all other undertakings, the theatre has suffered severely from the disastrous times; doubly unfortunate because your lease has terminated in these gloomy days, when we might have reasonably expected, had it terminated under more prosperous circumstances, the annual value of the lease could have been maintained, and your committee would not have to announce a loss of £500 a year—partly, however, balanced by the sum of £5 for all nights over 200 being increased to £10. It is not generally known that the owners of the theatre pay all rates and taxes, and, in fact, all outgoings. The lessee has, in other theatres, to pay all the charges in addition to his rent, Drury Lane Theatre being practically the cheapest theatre in London. Your committee have to regret the death of Mr John Brashford, a member of the Renter's Committee, and one of the trustees of the theatre—a gentleman who took an active part in all that related to the interest of the shareholders. The committee feel that they have lost a valuable member and a friend. Your committee are of opinion that Mr Chatterton is deserving of your best thanks for the way in which he keeps up his financial engagements with the shareholders, and for the kind, courteous, and urbane manner in which he has conferred and considered with your committee the interests of the debenture-holders."

*I deny this. Lost to a half deaf, or careless hearer, if you please.—D. P.

†Heightened, surely. How can "individuality" be lessened by "peculiarities"—which belong to individuality?—D. P.

SCENES FROM GOETHE'S *FAUST*, BY ROBERT SCHUMANN.

(Translated for "Dwight's Boston Journal of Music.")

Schumann's *Faust* music has afforded us, in the study of the score, in the course of the rehearsals, and finally in the performance itself, hours of edifying enjoyment such as we have only owed of late years to the *Manfred* of the same composer. Both works count with those transfigured and transfiguring creations which can give the critic joy in his vocation—in case they do not twist the pen out of his hand. We have here in mind, however, only the third part of the whole Schumann work, that is to say the conclusion of a succession of scenes, which one learns to know only with extremely mixed emotions. The history of the origin of the composition gives the best explanation of its internal contradictions. It was in the year 1844 when Schumann felt himself powerfully moved by the second part of Goethe's *Faust*. From it he composed at first the final chorus: "Alles vergangliche ist nur ein Gleichniss" ("All that doth pass away is but a symbol")—in short the condensed result, the spiritual sum and essence of the whole mystery brought before us by the poet. Thereupon without allowing his excited mood to cool off, Schumann proceeded to the working out of the whole mystery itself. Thus arose in Schumann's most vigorous epoch, in the time of the *Peri* and the first Symphony, this *Transfiguration of Faust*, which now forms the third part of a *Faust* cycle. A considerable time afterwards, probably after the *Transfiguration* had already been given in some cities in the year 1849, Schumann felt himself prompted to draw also other scenes from Goethe's poem into the realm of his illustration. He composed first out of the Second Part: the "Sunrise" (Ariel), "The four gray Women," "Faust's loss of sight," and "Faust's death." These four numbers form the second division with Schumann, which, while rich in significant, nay, genial passages, stands decidedly below the *Transfiguration* in originality and power. Incomparably weaker, indeed, to a melancholy degree in such a neighbourhood, is the (last composed) "first division," to wit, the overture and three pieces out of the first part of Goethe's drama: "Scene in the garden," "Gretchen before the image of the Madonna," and "Scene in the Cathedral." Thus we possess in Schumann's *Faust* a cycle of compositions widely separated in their periods of origin and of very unequal worth. He reproduces quite remarkably the relation between the two parts of Goethe's poem, only in the reverse order. Goethe placed by the side of the most splendid flowering of his youthful energy, "as a continuation," the cool reflection of his staid old age; by the spring of the most original poetry he placed the pretentious, artificial deduction from allegories; in a word, after the "first" and only part of *Faust* he placed—the "second." With Schumann the case is reversed, so that the allegorical and mystical scenes of the second part are the spontaneous product of musical creative power, while those of the first part form the late after-gleaning of a soul weary unto death.

It is not always the more perfect poem that attracts the more precious music. Where the musician finds a mission for himself, there the poet must have left something yet to be said, a something unexpressed, unfelt. Pictures like the garden scene in *Faust* are in themselves too perfect to admit of music. What composer in the world could make Gretchen's form more lovely, or the discourse of Faust more significant? Even Schumann went aground here. It is melancholy to contemplate, in his "first division," this restless modulation, this expressionless climbing of the voices up and down, which are meant to represent Faust and Gretchen to us. So much the more room, on the contrary, is there for the musical element in the second part of Goethe's poem, which stands poetically so much lower! One must be either an unqualified Goethe-worshipper, or a philosopher, or a musician, to be very enthusiastic over this second part.* Many scenes of the poem are scarcely conceivable without music;† the conclusion (*Faust Transfiguration*) remains at least incomplete without it, a soul without visible beautiful body.

Let us briefly bring before us the connection. Faust, in the second part, has to develop himself through larger and more

important relations with the world. A succession of great world phenomena, court and state, diplomacy and war, pass in review before our eyes. Here, too, Faust finds hollow, empty relations, which leave him unfilled. Full satisfaction, although swiftly fleeting, he enjoys for the first time on the classic field of ideal beauty, in the sight of Grecian Helen. With the vanishing of this ideal vision, Faust is given back again to the actual world. The time for enjoyment and for dreams is past for him; he seeks to create the useful, what bears fruit. With the help of spirits in his service he wrests an uninhabited land from the devastating elements and makes it arable. He curses the compact with the evil one, and wishes himself back in a simple, human way of living; but for that it is too late, Faust's career is closed. "Care" robs him of eyesight; "Death" is drawing near. Mephisto is on the watch for Faust's soul, which belongs to him by the compact. In the fight for the soul of the hero the devils are driven off by the "flame power of the heavenly roses," which (according to the mediæval allegory) the Angels bring down from above, to purify Faust's soul. Faust is saved. The "immortal" part of him cannot be lost, for there is an eternal beauty and an eternally forgiving love (both personified in the "Mater gloriosa,") which as "the ever-womanly," draws the sinner upward. Around the Madonna group themselves the "Pater extaticus" and "Doctor Marianus," (in whom is embodied the ascetic agony of penitence and love so common in the Middle Ages), the Angels, the Blessed Spirits, and other heavenly figures of the Catholic theology.

The composer, who approaches the conclusion of this poem, will trouble himself but little about the weighty objections which may be raised against the whole proceeding.‡ He finds in this closing scene just the ready text for a lyrical oratorio. Music, most supersensuous of the Arts, alone can render fixed and palpable these fluid, light-encompassed forms, and in a certain sense incorporate the scenically impossible proceeding. The tremulous twilight of the music makes a mystery dear and intelligible to us, which in the clear, sharp outline of the spoken word we find strange and repulsive. Even what disturbs the charm when spoken, like the Latinized crossing of the words imitated from the Church hymns, disappears under the purifying flood of the tone waves. Richard Wagner in his last *Epistle to a French Friend* makes the incredible assertion, that there are for poetry only two possible ways: it must either become perfectly abstract philosophy, or unite itself entirely with music. If we did not know that Wagner was thinking here of his own opera texts, we might imagine images from the second part of *Faust* to be floating before him in this paradox. The abstractly reflective and the half musical parts therein would be, according to Wagner, the model examples of true poetry. As regards the "half-musical," such as the transfiguration scene, it requires more than one would imagine to make it *wholly* musical. It would require an extraordinary and peculiar talent to give the poem that full and pure completion which it was waiting to receive from music. As we believe, it required precisely Robert Schumann's genius. Only a composer, in whom the artistic elements were mingled just so, and not otherwise, could venture to solve the lofty riddle of this *Faust-transfiguration*. Schumann has solved it in a most wonderful manner.

At the outset the first chorus, "Forests are waving grand," establishes the ground colour of the whole, this still, yet somewhat strange sense of blessedness, with a few masterstrokes. With deep, tranquil breath we drink in the unwonted, quickening, pure air. The characteristic, but rather monotonous tenor solo of the "Pater extaticus" was omitted in the performance. Somewhat livelier in melody and rhythm is the following bass solo with the expressive close, "O God, soothe Thou my thoughts bewildered!" From here onward the music grows ever richer, clearer, and more inward. An extremely graceful song of "Blessed Boys" leads into the jubilant chorus, "Saved," from which again a tender soprano solo ("These roses") is charmingly set off. The hymn of "Doctor Marianus" (with harp accompaniment)—more deep and tender than enthusiastic—prepares the exalted mood for the chorus, "Thee, the intangible," admirably. Then follows the song of Penitent Women. This deep and heart-felt melody, descending in even quarter notes, with which is blended Gretchen's wonderfully transfigured prayer, seems to us the pearl of the

* What will Bayard Taylor say to this?—Ed.

† The song of the Elves; the Masquerade procession; the strophes of the flower-girl; of the olive branch, &c., the announcement of Pulcinello, of the Boy Charlotte, of Pluto, &c.

‡ These objections are most strikingly exposed by Vischer, who has passed the sharpest criticism upon the whole second part of *Faust*.

whole. In mystical tremors die away the "Mater gloriosa's" words of benediction. Then sets in with imposing weight, amid the roaring peal of trombones, the concluding chorus, "Alles vergänglich," &c. ("All that is transitory is but a symbol"), and wings itself aloft in triumphant flight at the words, "The ever-womanly draws us on and upward."

To enter more deeply into the musical details is here impossible. We would only point to one peculiar excellence ennobling the whole work. That is the remarkable moderation and chasteness in the expression. If there was ever a poem made to mislead a composer into unnatural exaltation, it is this transfiguration scene. What modern composer would not have been tempted, by his own sense of insufficiency, to the most audacious experiments in harmony and instrumentation, to the most far-fetched over-refinement of melody? Imagine how Wagner or the Weimarites would have depicted *das Unbegreifliche* (the incomprehensible)! Schumann, on the contrary, avoids all that is unbeautiful and measureless with such a tender feeling, that he resolves even the chopped and broken exclamations of the "Pater Extaticus" into the symmetry of a still collected glow. In the Angel choruses there is no trace of outward pageantry or glitter. All is heartfelt, warm and simple. Far from Schumann lay the temptation to approach the poem on its brilliant outside. He let it grow warm in his heart, and then gave us, instead of a transcendental scene of triumph, a piece of his deepest and most individual feeling. If it be the best problem of the oratorio to represent the divine as something humanly beautiful and soulful, then has Schumann here revealed in what a beautiful, high sense he would have become an oratorio composer.

Édouard Hanslick.

MUSIC, &c., AT BOULOGNE-SUR-MER.

(From a Correspondent.)

Carmen has been produced at the Salle Monsigny, with M^{me} Chauveau as the heroine, M^{lle} Jouanny as Micaëla, M^{lle} Riff, *première chanteuse* of the troupe, as Mercedes, M. Pellin as Don José, M. Toscan as Morales, and M. Delbecchi, one of the best baritone actors seen here for some time, as his companion. On the whole, the performance was creditable. The chorus was good, but the orchestra left something to desire. The fact is, the same musicians who play every day from four to five at the Casino, under one conductor in a large music-room, constructed more to please the eye than charm the ear, have to perform at the theatre four times a week in a closely packed orchestra, and under a different conductor. M. Froment has not been very successful in his selection of tenors this season. M. Guille, after getting through Arnold in *Guillaume Tell*, Fleazar in *La Juive*, and Fernand in *La Favorite*, was judged fit to retire. M. Mazurini, after appearing in Manrico (*Le Trouvère*) and Edgard (*Lucie*), has been replaced by another tenor, who appears in *La Juive* to-night. M^{lle} Riff, whom I announced in my last as about to appear in the last-named opera, is all that can be desired, not only as the Jewess, but also as Azucena in the *Trouvère*.

At the present moment there are two circuses at Boulogne—Myers', from London, with a splendid troop of horses, elephants, lions, &c., under canvas, located for a week at Capécure, and the Cirque Milanèse, in a large wooden building on the place Frederic Sauvage, opposite the Hotel Christol.

The fair opened yesterday. There are two theatres; a Cirque Brésilien, where monkeys, dogs, ponies, and goats appear twice a day, besides the usual merry-go-rounds, giants, dwarfs, mermaids, &c., not forgetting the conventional fried potato shops.

A M. Charles de Wagner, who styles himself "Directeur et Compteur des Pucies," announces his arrival with "*Les Pucies Sarantes*, qui sont attelées comme des chevaux, traînent des voitures, locomotives, canons, jusqu'au chemin de fer. Nota. Repas des insectes Lilliputiens à 11 heures et 6 heures. Séance extraordinaire, 1 fr. P.S.—On achète les pucies à 1 franc la douzaine, mais pas les pucies d'animaux."

After that, "Que voulez-vous?" I must conclude by telling you that about forty *savants anglais* (our boy will write it *savans*) arrived yesterday by boat to make discoveries and look for geological specimens in our neighbourhood.

X. T. R.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, August 6.



Opera Lyrics.

No. 101.

Ec Nihilò, &c.

Meanwhile of my dear treasure
Go you to calm the grief;
And from her lovely eyes
Try you to wipe the tears.

—o—

Tell her that all her wrongs
I hasten to revenge;
That I of his destruction
The messenger will be.



[Exit to no purpose.]

[He should have been invited to meet the
Commandant at supper.]

WIESBADEN.

(From our Biberich Correspondent.)

2nd August.

The Town Direction of the Kurhaus arranges, for the summer season, ten concerts in the large and gorgeous marble hall, which are not included in the subscription of the visitors. The sixth of these concerts took place on the 2nd August, when a thorough cosmopolitan *assemblée* came together. The concert began with a new overture, *Normannenmarsch*, by Dietrich, a well-worked piece of music, somewhat in the style of Baron Oreczy's overture lately performed at the New Philharmonic in London; plenty of fire and water, a continuation of the *Walküre*. Herr Joseph Joachim came next, and played the 9th Concerto of Spohr in a Joachimist style, his noble tone, his accurate passages, his masterly conception, together with the prestige of his name, creating for him a storm of applause, which ended in a "tush," a kind of *fanfare*, from the orchestra (a tribute of respect for any great *maestro*)—about this:—

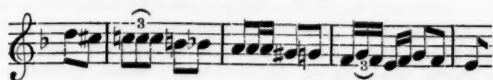


Trumpets (Drums).

After this ovation Mr J. B. Mills, the well-known pianist from New York, had some difficulty to shine out, in playing the F minor concerto of Chopin, but did it most creditably to himself; he played like a true artist, clear, neat, and even with elegance; and our brethren over the water possess in him an artist of merit, and a true representative of the new school. There were only three songs, "Bel raggio," and the two from Beethoven's *Egmont*, a few solos or the piano, and Joachim's *andante* from his Hungarian Concerto, and his ever-green and fresh playing of Bach's Fugue and Gavotte. There were no more overtures nor symphony. The rooms were hot, the concert lasted just two hours, and everyone was pleased, and did not wish for more than fresh air, and perhaps Lagerbier. L.

MAYENCE (from a Hockheim correspondent).—The Stadische Capelle (town orchestra) continues to give performances every day. This orchestra was instituted by Herr Schott, the late burgermeister and music publisher, in his legacy to the town. These concerts take place every day in the garden of Raimandi, for the gratification of the Mayence ladies, who enjoy the music and the lovely scenery gratuitously—a noble example of musical charity.

Minnie (Carmen) Hawk.



At the Service Tree and Sable.

MAJOR PULLIT.—Have you seen Carmen?

DR NOSE.—No.

MAJOR PULLIT.—You must go.

DR NOSE.—I can't. Minnie Hawk is on the Righi.

MAJOR PULLIT.—Mapleson will have the opera played there for you expressly.

DR NOSE.—I wont go. It's too far off, and too high up.

MAJOR PULLIT.—I told Mapleson you'd go. Weist Hill will conduct. If you don't go, I shall—

DR NOSE.—Ho! ho! Ahi! ahi! Configurations! Don't. MAJOR PULLIT.—I swore you'd go, and I never allow my oath to be broken.

DR NOSE.—Ahi! ahi! Ho! ho!

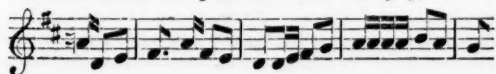
MAJOR PULLIT.—I swore I'd pull your nose if you refused to go, and I never allow—

DR NOSE.—Ho! ho! Ahi! ho! Don't!—I'll go!

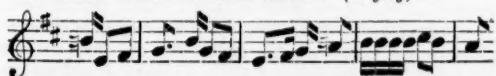
MAJOR PULLIT.—Since you will go, all right. Shells and arquebuses!

DR NOSE.—Ahi! Configurations!

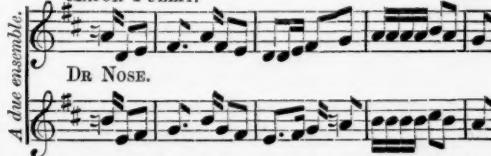
MAJOR PULLIT.—Scarps and culverins! (Singing):—



DR NOSE.—Shafts and countermines! (Singing):—

MAJOR PULLIT and DR NOSE.— { That Hawk!
 { That Minnie!

MAJOR PULLIT.



DR NOSE.

[Exeunt, singing inebriately, to Bee and Bottle.]

MUSIC AT THE ANTIPODES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Since last mail the Soldene English Opera Company concluded their season at the Prince of Wales Operahouse. They have also performed at Ballarat and Sandhurst.—The Italian Opera Company (minus some of the members) who came to Australia from Europe early last year, and opened for the first time in this part of the world on the 17th February, 1877, at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, with *Ruy Blas*, have returned to the Operahouse (where they appeared for a season last winter), and commenced on the 1st inst. with *Faust*. Mr. Armes Beaumont, Mr. C. Lester, Mr. T. B. Browning, and Miss Bessie Royal are members of the company as at present constructed. *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *Il Trovatore* have since been produced; and last evening Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* (first time in Australia). Miss Amy Sherwin, a native of Tasmania, made a successful *début* as Lucia in Donizetti's opera; and Miss Bessie Pitts, a young lady of Australian training, made hers as the Page in *Un Ballo*. Both ladies were well received. Miss Sherwin is a favourite in Melbourne. She has played Leonora, *Il Trovatore* (in English), and won marked approval.—The German Liedertafel gave a concert on the 20th ult., when, amongst other things, Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis Nacht* was performed. On the same evening the Metropolitan Leidertafel gave one, at which the leading feature was Schumann's Quintet in E flat, Op. 44.—A complimentary concert to Mrs. Julius Hertz, held in the Athenæum Hall, on the 22nd ult., was very successful.—A second concert in favour of Miss Lucinda Blackham was given in the Town Hall, on the 25th ult., before a large audience. Miss Blackham, native of Australia, is a vocalist of more than ordinary promise.—All who know Mr. W. Saurin Lyster, the enterprising lessee of the Prince of Wales Operahouse, regret to learn that he is compelled to visit Europe for the benefit of his health. Mr. Armes Beaumont returns home with Mr. Lyster. The public of Australia owe much to Mr. Lyster, more particularly on account of his operatic entertainments. It is hoped that he may soon come back to Melbourne with health completely restored. On the 31st ult. Mr. Lyster had a farewell benefit concert in the Town Hall.—The Musical Artists' Society gave their first concert at the Athenæum on the 3rd inst. The programme was good, and well carried out.—The Monday Evening Popular Concerts at the Town Hall have become an institution. They are really good, and the prices of admission reasonable.—Herr Johannes Elmlad and Mdme Maggie Elmlad (formerly Miss Menzies, of this city) arrived from Berlin a few weeks ago, and held their first concert in the Town Hall on the 8th inst. Herr Elmlad is a bass of merit, and Mdme Elmlad an accomplished pianist. They were supported by Mrs. Cutler and the Melbourne Quartet Society.

J. T. L. F.

Melbourne, 11th June, 1878.

MILAN.—It has been resolved that the proposed Centenary shall not be celebrated at the Scala, but that the money to have been devoted to it shall go to repairing and re-decorating the building, which has long been in a state of dilapidation, discreditable to the proprietors.

MADRID.—An Italian buffo opera company, with Sig. Lupi as conductor and Signora Maria Frigerio as principal singer, has been performing *Giroflé-Girofla*. This is to be followed up with *Le Petit Duc*.

To ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyle Street (First Floor). It is requested that Advertisements may be sent not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1878.

ARTICLES FROM "THE TIMES" ON
MDLLE ETELKA GERSTER.

1877.

No. 1.

If Bellini's *Sonnambula* is brought out with a new Amina of more than average pretensions, it is tolerably sure to create a certain degree of excitement. Such has been the case from the time that Malibran first introduced the opera to an English audience, through an English version, when, some forty years ago, the well-known "manager-poet," Alfred Bunn, directed the fortunes of Drury Lane Theatre—among the most memorable instances of later days being the *début* of Adelina Patti, as a girl in her teens, in 1861, and that of Emma Albani, in 1872.

On Saturday night general curiosity was raised by the announcement that Mdlle Etelka Gerster (Mdme Gardini), who has been playing with cordial recognition at the theatre in Kroll's Gardens, Berlin, would give fresh life to the village pastoral of Romani and Bellini, now on the verge of its half-century of existence, and still charming, not only because of its unobtrusive prettiness, but in virtue of many impassioned phrases that speak to us with the persuasive eloquence of genuine melody. We were also led to expect an Amina endowed with individuality so marked as to encourage the belief that a new and striking conception of a character with which we are about as familiar as with that of any heroine belonging to the repertory of the lyric stage was to be witnessed. The former condition at least was fulfilled. If the occasion had been the first performance of *La Sonnambula*, as well as the first essay of a *débütante* among us, the reception could not have been more enthusiastic, the applause more frequent, and, to say the truth, here and there, more indiscriminate. Mdlle Gerster is by birth Hungarian. To Hungary the musical world is indebted for not a few distinguished artists—vocalists and instrumentalists; and we shall be only too glad if future opportunities of appreciating the talent of Mdlle Gerster may enable us to class her among the number. At present it may almost suffice to state that everything she did, from the opening *cavatina* to the last *finale*, was, judging by the manner of its acceptance, considered not merely good, but, in the common French idiom, "*hors-ligne*." Yet, with a voice of considerable range, and in the higher notes—as she takes abundant pains to show—capable, if skilfully managed, of feats beyond the common, Mdlle Gerster is a very unequal singer, occasionally achieving feats that surprise no less than they please, but as often barely attaining the contemplated mark. The recitative preceding the *cavatina* of the opening scene, "Come per me sereno," for example, was declaimed with such well-considered expression as to engender a belief almost unanimous that another great singer was revealed to us, and the applause at the end was tumultuous; but the *cavatina* itself, notwithstanding some original and elaborate embellishments, was hardly executed with such invariable finish as to justify that conclusion. The love duet, however, with Elvino (Signor Fancelli), upon which the curtain descends at the termination of the first section of Act I, elicited renewed manifestations, and Mdlle Gerster had still more reason to be satisfied with her appreciative and sympathetic audience. The following scene, where the sonnambulist unconsciously disturbs the privacy of Count Rodolpho (Signor del Puente) in his bed-chamber, evoked no less approval; while that of the mill, with the awakening of Amina, to find her innocence acknowledged and her love once more reciprocated, was a fitting climax. Each verse of the joyous

peroration, "Ah non giunge," brought down unmeasured applause, and Mdlle Gerster was thrice summoned before the curtain. Under the circumstances, we would rather postpone any deliberate opinion with regard to the new *prima donna*'s assuredly exceptional capabilities as a vocalist. Her dramatic powers, we apprehend, will require less serious consideration. Mdlle Gerster's second appearance is announced for Thursday night.

No. 2.

Mdlle Etelka Gerster, whose highly favourable reception on the night of her *début* before a London audience, as Amina in the *Sonnambula*, was recorded in befitting terms, has established her position with the patrons of Her Majesty's Theatre. Lucia—which, being more essentially dramatic than Amina, as well as being serious throughout, taxes her powers as an actress, if not as a singer, in a severer sense—led her a step onward. Here, again, she found ample occasion to display the rare quality of those notes belonging to the upper register of her voice, which she must have cultivated with the utmost assiduity, and her facile employment of which never fails to rouse her hearers. Not to enter into details, we may point to the concluding air in the scene of the madness, "Spargi d'amaro pianto," and to the original and striking cadence by means of which she reaches a climax that would probably have surprised Donizetti. In level singing, especially where the middle voice has to deal with successive closely-knit "gruppettos," Mdlle Gerster is less uniformly successful; and to obtain evenness of tone and quality in such passages exacts no less constant and assiduous practice than the other. An artist so well endowed and evidently earnest as Mdlle Gerster, however, is not likely to neglect any necessary study that may enable her to approach nearer and nearer the goal of perfection which it should be, and doubtless is, her ambition to attain. *I Puritani*, Mdlle Gerster's next essay, was, we think, regarded as a whole, her most successful one. Elvira has a good many florid passages to execute, but also certain *cantabile* phrases demanding genuine and unforced expression. Among them stand conspicuous the reverie, "Arturo, a già ritorno?" when the suddenly deranged Elvira imagines that Arturo has as suddenly returned (*finale* to Act I.); to the touchingly melodious "Qui la voce," when, absorbed in thoughts of her absent lover, she dwells sadly on the past; and one or two others that need not be specified. To these, and especially to the first-named, Mdlle Gerster imparts all the essential feeling without a touch of exaggeration; but they hardly make as strong an impression on her audience as the well-known *polacca*, "Son vergin vezzosa," or the *cabaletta*, "Vien diletto," with its florid embellishments. How and in what manner these would be executed by the young Hungarian lady might have been guessed in advance by those who have carefully watched her previous performances. The high notes introduced at the end of the *polacca*, of course, to employ a conventional phrase, "brought down the house" on each occasion, and to these again Mdlle Gerster was indebted for an encore and triple "re-call." Much the same effect, though perhaps in a less demonstrative measure, was created by "Vien diletto," already mentioned. Still, we prefer listening to her in snatches of such melody as occur in the great duet with Arturo (Act III.); for example, "Oh parole di amor!" and "Caro, non ho parola," where she can use the medium tones of her voice in such a way as to let her hearers feel what their quality actually may be. Enough, however, has been said to show that the artistic progress of the new *prima donna* will be followed with increasing interest.

No. 3.

An alteration of the cast of *Rigoletto* imparted special interest to the performance of Verdi's best opera, which had already been given twice. Gilda was the fourth part essayed by Mr Mapleson's new Hungarian *prima donna*, Mdlle Gerster; and though it does not offer so many opportunities for *ad captandum* display as either of its precursors, she maintained the ground she had won, and this by other means. Her conception of the part is natural, and she carries

it out consistently to the end. There is no attempt at hyper-dramatic expression, and for this she merits praise, inasmuch as it would be inconsistent with the gentle individuality of the character. Nevertheless, in the first meeting with her lover, the supposed student, and in the great duet of the second act, where Gilda is restored to the arms of her despairing father, she is impassioned enough, a little more repose and a little less redundant gesture being all that is required to disarm criticism. In these situations we found most to admire, and in these, too, Mdle Gerster's vocalization was most unreservedly to be praised. We expressed but recently a wish to hear more of her level singing, so as to enable us better to judge of the quality of her medium tones. A good opportunity for this was offered by her part in the duet with Rigoletto, "Ah! veglia O donna," the flowing melody of which, in response to its first delivery by the barytone voice, was enunciated with equal purity and charm. That the *staccato* passages for soprano, in the variation of the second verse, were all that could be desired, few who have heard Mdle Gerster will be surprised to hear. Further occasion was afforded for *cantabile* singing in the *andantino* of the succeeding duet between Gilda and her lover, where the phrase "Ah de' miei vergini," &c., was uttered with real tenderness. We own to have been somewhat disappointed with Gilda's soliloquy, "Caro nome," cleverly as it was executed on the whole, and that we found the *cadenzas*, especially the concluding one, with *staccato* traits unknown to Verdi, out of keeping with so exquisitely simple a melody. At the same time we are bound to record that this not only obtained more applause than anything else during the evening, but was called for again and repeated. The duet between Gilda and the Jester, already referred to, was also the signal for a renewed demonstration, and more than one call before the lamps.

No. 4.

Perhaps, however, the main point of attraction on this occasion was Mdle Gerster, to hear whom in the two airs of *Astrifiamante*, "Queen of Night," there existed a natural curiosity. Nor was curiosity doomed to disappointment. The part, as we all know, was written for an exceptional voice; and that the voice of Mdle Gerster is exceptional in its higher register need not be said. In the first air, which comprises a plaintive *larghetto* in the minor key and a brilliant *allegro* in the major, she was most successful with the *allegro*, where a mere inkling of what she has subsequently to execute is observed. In the second, by far the most trying and difficult, she was eminently successful throughout. Here she has high notes, *staccato* and to spare, every one of which was given with marvellous ease and distinctness. Mdle Gerster adopts the version of the once famous Anna Zerr, who, to make the most salient passages still more difficult, used, at its repetition to take the notes at the end of each division of the phrase an octave higher than Mozart wrote them, even for his "exceptional voice." Mdle Gerster does the same with the greatest ease, and the result was a hurricane of plaudits and an encore which she could not gracefully decline. Nevertheless, she ought not to alter Mozart's climax with the shake and high note she interpolates in the two last bars of the vocal part. It is "*l'es majesté*;" we have had, moreover, enough of high notes without that.

1878.

No. 1.

The *Sonnambula*, once more presented on Saturday night for the re-appearance of Mdle Etelka Gerster, who in the summer of last year created so lively an impression, brought a large and appreciative audience to Her Majesty's Theatre. Mdle Gerster was wise to select the same character in which she had made her *debut* and achieved her first London success. That she has been studying assiduously during the interval and made real progress in her art is undeniable. It was shown early in the opera by her facile delivery of the cavatina, "Come per me sereno," and its brilliant sequel, "Sovra il sen, la man' mi posa," which, like all existing *prima donnas*, she embellishes freely according to her own

fancy. The applause at the end of this remarkable display of vocalization was unanimous, and showed that Mdle Gerster had already won the favour of her audience. The parting duet with Elvino (Signor Fancelli) at the termination of Act I established this beyond a doubt, and the lovers were summoned before the curtain to be applauded again and again. In the second act, Mdle Gerster made a still more marked sensation. Amina's dream of happiness in her unconscious state of somnambulism was characterized by charming touches, among which may be specially mentioned the delivery of the passage, "Elvino, già tua son io," replete with genuine sentiment, and the opening phrase of the duet, "D'un pensiero, d'un accento rea non son," in which the anguish of the guiltless maiden was forcibly portrayed. After this scene there were two re-calls for Mdle Gerster, who came forward accompanied by Signor Fancelli. The third act, however, naturally afforded Mr. Mapleson's new *prima donna* the most favourable opportunity of exhibiting her vocal powers, and of this she took ample advantage. Certain passages were given with a sentiment so true that it was evident that the singer felt herself to be the character she was impersonating. Among these may be specially noted "Grand Dio non mirar il mio pianto," where the somnambulist, conscious, though sleeping, of her innocence, pardons instead of condemning her jealous lover. The address to the faded flowers, too—"Ah! non credea mirarti"—would have been perfect but for the new reading at the end, which, for one in a state of somnambulism, was much too emphatic. The sequel, however, was what might have been expected. The awakening to life and the restoration to happiness, as set forth in the joyous *finale*, "Ah non giunge," afforded Mdle Gerster another opportunity of exhibiting her vocal facility, of which she did not fail to make the best use. How remarkable her command of the highest notes in the range of her voice is well known, and has more than once been dwelt upon; but to this may be added her power of sustaining them, loud or soft, according to her impulse. At the fall of the curtain the applause was more vociferous than ever, and the call for the singer no less loud and unanimous than before. With the exception of Signor Fancelli, who replaced Signor Bettini in the part of Elvino, the cast was precisely the same as when, on the opening night, Mdle. Marimon played Amina.

No. 2.

Mdle Etelka Gerster's success in *La Sonnambula* was renewed on Friday night by her performance in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. In *Lucia*, the second part she essayed at Her Majesty's Theatre during the summer of 1877, she was received with no less favour. Here, while her powers as a singer are taxed to an equal extent, her powers as an actress are taxed even more severely. *Lucia*, from beginning to end, is a more or less tragic heroine; not so the ingenuous Amina, who, in the first scenes, away from the little petulant exhibitions of jealousy on behalf of her betrothed husband, Elvino, is all liveliness and joy. Mdle Gerster, however, is as competent to enter into the spirit of one character as of the other, while her voice, in certain peculiarities one of the exceptional voices of the day, brings the music—sometimes highly expressive, sometimes, as in the scene of the madness, intentionally florid—easily within her means. Although there was very much to commend, and that unreservedly, in the earlier portions of the opera, this was the scene in which she particularly shone and elicited the most genuine and unanimous approval. Mdle Gerster was greatly applauded after the cavatina, "Regnava nel silenzio," and its sequel, "Quando rapita in estasi," as also in the duets, successively, with Signor Fancelli (Edgardo) and Signor Del Puente (Enrico), besides being complimented with equal warmth at the end of the contract scene, including the fine concerted piece, "Chi mi frena in tal momento," so often cited. At the termination of the *finale* to the act, of which this is the most absorbing feature, the heroine of the evening was twice called before the curtain. But, as we have hinted, the scene of the madness of *Lucia*, judging from the general

demeanour of the audience, was the culminating triumph of the evening; and to this Mdle Gerster devoted all her power of expression, all her enthusiasm, and all her exceptional vocal resources. The shake in the *cadenza* of "Spargi d'amaro pianto" was one of the longest and most persistently sustained we can remember. Again there was a double recall and again Mdle Gerster was applauded "to the echo."

No. 3.

Mdile Etelka Gerster, by her impersonation of the heroine in Gounod's *Faust*, has legitimately added one more to her successes at Her Majesty's Theatre. What is especially to be commended in Mr Mapleson's Hungarian *prima donna*, who has already gained such marked approval, is the individuality imparted to each character she undertakes. Imitating no contemporary, Mdle Gerster thinks for herself, which alone is an attraction to those who believe that an essential requirement for every artist aiming at a position apart from the ordinary rank is originality of conception. Regarded from this point of view, Mdle Gerster's Marguerite deserves serious consideration. The music does not afford her so many occasions for the free display of certain exceptional endowments with which she has been justly credited—few such, indeed, as are vouchsafed to her in the *Sonnambula*, the *Puritani*, and *Lucia*; but it enables her to exhibit other merits, to which attention has been more than once directed. The beauty of the higher notes in the register of her voice and her facile command of them form by no means Mdle Gerster's exclusive claim to admiration. As was remarked a twelvemonth since, she can use the medium tones in such a manner as to compel her hearers to feel of what quality they are actually made, and to what excellent uses they may be put. That Mdle Gerster gave the "Jewel Song" with fluency and brilliant effect may be taken for granted; but not less deserving of praise was her delivery of the two melodious *cantabile* passages in the subsequent love duet with Faust, to which she imparted an expression too genuine to be unfelt. Enough that her successive assumptions continually show progress—the evidence of assiduous study, without which no aspiring artist can ever reach the highest place.

No. 4.

(Il *Talismano*.)

Mdile Etelka Gerster, since her first appearance among us, has rarely earned heartier or better merited applause than by her singing in this opera. The vocal part might have been written expressly for her, with such perfection did she render it. It is agreeable to see a foreign artist of eminence anxious to do every justice to the music of an English composer. True, it is a bounden duty for every one who accepts a responsible position to spare no thought or trouble in imparting the best effect to whatever it is found expedient to produce in the theatre at which he or she may be engaged; but this obligation is not always seriously borne in mind. Mdle Gerster, however, used her utmost endeavours to do all that could possibly be done with the music assigned to Edith Plantagenet, and was successful in proportion. She sang the melodious "Placida notte" with charming grace and the "Canzone d'Evelina" with all the desired expression, obtaining the heartiest applause in both. In these she touched the audience; but in the air, "Nella viva," in the last act, where the ornaments, *cadenzas*, and high notes of which she is such an expert mistress, found opportunities for display, she fairly surprised them—the D in "alt," at the conclusion, with the shake on the leading note that preceded it, being real feats of "virtuosity." In her conception of the part, from a dramatic point of view, Mdle Gerster, earnest as ever, left little or nothing to desire, and her Edith may fairly be accepted as one of her most legitimately successful efforts.

No. 5.

The second week of representations at reduced prices, and the last of the season, came to an end on Saturday night. The opera chosen was *Lucia di Lammermoor*, with Mdle Etelka Gerster,

Mdme Bauermeister, Signors Fancelli and Galassi, in the four leading characters—Lucia, Alisa, Edgardo, and Enrico; the less conspicuous parts of Raimondo and Arturo being allotted to Signors Franceschi and Rinaldini. The house was crowded to the roof. The performance on the whole was generally efficient, every one doing the best that was possible for the occasion—the benefit of Mdle Gerster. About the Hungarian lady's impersonation of the unhappy Lucy Ashton we have previously spoken in terms of high praise, and now, as was natural enough, she exerted herself to the utmost, not only affording us no reason to modify the good impression first created, but, on the contrary, doing more than enough to confirm it. So carefully considered and thoroughly well wrought out a conception—a conception entirely her own, be it understood—merits all praise. It was appreciated throughout, and the applause was in proportion to its deserts. The *cavatina*, "Regnava nel silenzio," with the familiar *cabaletta*, "Quando rapita," and the farewell duet with Edgardo at the end of the first act, in which Mdle Gerster was ably supported by Signor Fancelli, produced their accustomed effect. Not less remarkable was the scene of the contract (the opening of the second act, containing the duet with Enrico, being omitted), where the unanticipated apparition of Edgardo disturbs and frustrates the pleasant family arrangements for the union of poor Lucia with Arturo (the Arthur Bucklaw of Walter Scott). In this Mdle Gerster's demeanour and acting were earnest and impressive in the extreme, and no little was due to her for the encore obtained by the celebrated concerted piece, "Chi mi frena in tal momento," the prominent feature in one of Donizetti's most striking and admirably constructed finales. Of course, the scene of the madness of Lucia was the crowning point of the whole; and this, though exception might be taken to a certain *staccato* accompaniment for the voice while one of the early melodies in the opera—"Verrano a te sull'aure"—is being played in the orchestra, and to the prolonged shake in the *cadenza* improvised for the otherwise most expressively delivered *cabaletta*, "Spargi d'amaro pianto," was a brilliant success—as was testified by the unanimous applause that ensued. Mdle Gerster was thrice enthusiastically called back at the end, and bouquets came from all directions.

After *Lucia* the second act of *Dinorah* was performed. * * * Mdle Gerster gave the "Shadow Song," as it is called; and this was another signal for unanimous and reiterated applause. At the end Mdle Gerster appeared three times before the curtain. The National Anthem followed, the solo verses being delivered with genuine British emphasis by the Austro-Hungarian *prima donna*, the whole audience rising, according to custom. Then there were more calls for Mdle Gerster; and lastly, in succession, for Sir Michael Costa and Mr Mapleson, both of whom came forward.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

MdLE FERNANDA TEDESCA, the clever, promising, and charming young American violinist, has been pursuing her studies with great assiduity in Paris. She is said to have made extraordinary promise. In the winter she proposes coming to London, where she will be heartily welcome.

OUR excellent composer, Mr Henry Gadsby, is writing a new cantata expressly for Mr Kuhe's next Brighton Festival, the subject of which is Scott's *Lord of the Isles*.—*Graphic*.

OUR musical readers will be pleased to learn that our eminent musician, Sir Julius Benedict, who has recently been indisposed, is now convalescent.

MDME MONTIGNY-REMAURY, one of the most distinguished of French pianists, is to play to-night, for the first time, at the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts.

MR CHARLES LYALL, our great humourist and distinguished lyric comedian, has returned from his trip on the Continent, during which he has visited many towns and cities, climbed many hills, and reposed in many valleys. The trip has been beneficial as well as agreeable, and has profited his health no less than his spirits. May his shadow never be less!

Adelina Patti as an Actress.

BY HENRY HERSEE.

(From "The Theatre.")

Acting of the highest quality is rarely met with on the operatic stage.* Lyric artists have to devote almost the whole of their lives to the study and practice of vocalization, and can rarely find time to make acting a serious study. In most of the chief vocal academies there are professors of declamation, but their duties are generally discharged in a merely perfunctory manner, and although their lessons may be better than none, they do little more than convey general ideas of pronunciation, emphasis, and articulation. On the dramatic stage an actor must rise by degrees, and cannot be engaged for first-rate parts until he has acquired the art of acting. On the operatic boards it is not uncommon to see *débuts* made by novices who scarcely know how to walk across the stage, but who are allowed to appear in characters which would task the powers of accomplished artists. A fine voice is supposed to be sufficiently attractive to compensate for the absence of histrionic ability, and even of proper vocal culture. It is not surprising that under this *régime* good acting has become rare on the lyric stage, and that operatic performances are sometimes little better than fancy dress concerts. It is only by the force of innate dramatic genius that an artist can break through the trammels of conventionality with which the lyric stage is beset, and genius of this kind has seldom been so vividly and unmistakably revealed as in the acting of Madame Adelina Patti. The merits of this great artist's acting may justly claim special notice in a journal devoted to the highest interests of dramatic art, and the subject can hardly be discussed without suggesting important considerations to students.

Madame Adelina Patti is equally successful in comedy and tragedy, because of the imaginative power with which she is largely endowed. Whether she has to impersonate the coquettish Rosina or the unhappy Margherita, she is able to call up an ideal conception of either character, and to reproduce it visibly and audibly, by the aid of her acting and elocution. The marvel is that her impersonations always have a life-like reality, and she looks, moves, and speaks as if she were actually the ideal personage whom she represents. This is always noticeable when she is mutely listening or watching.† Her facial expression throws light upon all that is going on around her; and, were all her comrades to imitate her example, complete dramatic illusion would be secured, and the value of operatic performances would be incalculably enhanced. From her imaginative power springs the spontaneity which is a conspicuous charm in her acting. As in every impersonation she reproduces the ideal presented to her imagination, conventionality is out of the question. The spontaneity of her acting has often been manifested by her sudden adoption of new "business," suggested to her imagination while acting. A few years back she thrilled her audience by an impromptu effect in the "Miserere" scene of *Il Trovatore*. When the voice of her imprisoned lover, Manrico, was suddenly heard in the opening strains of "Ah che la morte," she gave one gasp of wondering horror and fell suddenly to the ground, helpless. How she was recalled to life by the tones of her lover's voice—how she raised herself on one elbow to listen—how, too faint to walk, she crawled to the prison door—how she tried to dislodge the stones of the prison walls with her slender fingers, will never be forgotten by those who saw her play Leonora on that memorable occasion. She subsequently declared that she had not premeditated this startling effect, and could hardly remember what she had done. In this instance, as in others which might be cited, she had so completely merged her own identity in that of the character she impersonated that the impulse suddenly originated by her imagination was irresistible.

Imaginative power may ensure intensity of emotional expression, and the spontaneity which renders acting life-like and natural; but in order to secure the highest results, it must be combined with that refined faculty of judgment which is designated "good taste"; and this is prominent in Madame Adelina Patti's acting, as well as in her singing. By the aid of this faculty, she discriminates between logical realism and acceptable dramatic effects, and polishes her conceptions until they become *beaux idéals*. When, as Norina in *Don Pasquale*, she torments the bewildered old Don almost out of his life, she occasionally lets the audience see that she really pities the victim whom she is torturing for his ultimate benefit. When in the last act of *La Traviata* her lover, Alfredo, repulses her suggestion that he should marry, and she imperatively bids him do so, her "Io lo voglio!" is firmly uttered; and a momentary contraction of her lips and a swift shudder of her frame betray the pangs which

she conceals from him. When, as the heroine of *Aida*, she submits with the meekness of a slave to the taunts of her mistress, Amneris, the remembrance that she is herself a royal princess occasionally flashes eloquently from her eyes—swiftly to die out as she recollects that she is a captive. When, in *L'Etoile du Nord*, she peeps into the tent where her lover Peter (the disguised Czar) is getting drunk in the company of two free-and-easy vivandières, she is not content with displaying feminine jealousy and wrath, but shows that her heart sickens at Peter's self-degradation. It is in subtle touches of expression like these, no less than in her realization of grander conceptions, that this great artist shows how truly genius has been styled "the faculty of taking infinite pains." To multiply instances will be needless; but an article on Madame Adelina Patti's acting would be incomplete without some reference to her new rendering of Violetta's final scene in *La Traviata*. Instead of singing Violetta's dying words while reclining in a chair, she suddenly rose, as if by that supreme effort which has been likened to the last flicker of a candle, tottered a few paces forward, stood with her eyes gazing fixedly before her as if already penetrating the veil of futurity, spoke her final utterances in deep, thrilling tones; then suddenly collapsed, and fell back apparently lifeless. The effect was so vividly, terribly real, that some moments elapsed before the spectators recovered from the emotion excited by this wonderful display of histrionic genius, never to be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to be present. As an actress, Madame Patti is fortunate in the possession of striking personal advantages—a lithe, graceful figure, finely cut and expressive features, dark, eloquent eyes, and an exquisitely rich, brilliant, and sympathetic voice. Her greatest charm, however, is the intellectuality which irradiates her impersonations. It is this which imparts fascination to her acting, and sympathetic quality to her voice, and the lesson may be advantageously studied by those who are emulous of her fame. It is not by adherence to tradition and conventionality, but by the perfect elaboration of original conceptions, that Madame Adelina Patti's acting has become almost equal in merit to her superb vocalization.

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COPENHAGEN.

(Correspondence.)

Several touring companies will shortly visit the provincial cities of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. Among the leading artists may be mentioned Mdlles Valleria, Tremelli, MM. Foli, Runcio, Ovide Musin, and F. Cowen. The Florentine Quartet, also, will, this season, visit Scandinavia for the first time. Mdlle Johanna Becker, who, under her father's guidance, has already made a reputation as a pianist, does not, however, accompany them. Assisted by Herr Hilpert, former violoncellist of the Quartet, and Mdlle Cornelia Travers, a young vocalist from Mannheim, she will make a concert tour of her own through Germany.

—o—

THE ORGAN AT THE TROCADERO.

The first recital on the grand organ of the Trocadero took place on Wednesday afternoon, and more than 3,000 persons were turned away from the doors. The concert was an immense success. These recitals at the Trocadero are entirely gratuitous, and it is the first time that such instrumental performances have been introduced in France. The organist is M. Guilmant, of the Eglise de la Trinité.

Hammocks, Plainmen, Plainwomen, Peripatetics, &c.

To F. C. Burnand, Esq.



HAMMOCK is now sometimes taken to picnics by a rubicund youth. As soon as one is properly rigged the youth rubicund finds it time to go home. Added to this a masked ball has been defined as a merciful institution for plainwomen; plainmen assume an effete garb, drinking all night, like Socrates, then going to the lavatory, to drench, and from the lavatory to the peripatetic groves, where knowledge is gathered in obambulating.—Yours evidently,

To Sutherland Edwards, Esq.

Paul Hoist.

* But when it is!—D. B.

† As it was with Mario—as it is with Christine Nilsson.—D. B.

KUNDRY

in R. Wagner's Stage-Consecrative-Festival-Play.

By J. H. LÖFFLER.*

(Continued from page 496.)

5. *Kondwiramur*, queen of Broburz, is shut up, kept a prisoner, in her capital, Pelrapär, by a hostile army. Parzival obtains with difficulty admission into the town, and is received by the Queen. *Da küsste sie der werthe Degen: die Munde waren beide roth. Die Königin die Hand ihm bot: Ein führte sie Herrn Parzival. Sie setzten nieder sich zumal.—Also sass des Landes Frau wie erquickte von süßem Thau die Ros' aus zarter Hülle hebt frischen Schimmers Fülle, der zumal ist weiss und roth! Das schuf dem Gaste grosse Noth.*† After sharing with him her scanty repast, she takes leave of him and he retires to rest. He is still lying in sweet morning sleep when he is awoke by *leises Schluchzen*;‡ opening his eyes, he perceives the mistress of the house, clad in only a white silk shift with a velvet mantle flung over her shoulders, kneeling down and bending over him. In answer to her entreaties, he promises to help her against her foes. In the morning he conquers, as in a duel, and delivers her. The marriage takes place. *But den man den rothen Ritter hiess, der Königin ihr Magdthum liess*||—as before the marriage—for two days to the third night.—After a time he bids her farewell, to look after his mother, and probably to seek adventures. Here, again, we have a coincidence with the saga, already mentioned, of Odhr and Freyja.§

A complete parallel may, moreover, be instituted between Parzival's relation to Kondwiramur and that of Siegfried to Brynhild in the *Edda*, as thus:—

1. Parzival forcing his way into Pelrapär, and kissing the captive Kondwiramur.

2. Parzival and the Queen sitting together, and their sharing, amid the distress of the siege, the last morsel (eating the *Viehliebchen*: love-cake).

3. Parzival and Kondwiramur, under one coverlet, he sparing her virginity.

1. Siegfried's ride to the Brynhild-stone, and his awakening of the sleeping Brynhild.

2. Siegfried and Brynhild seated together, while drinking lovingly after the awakening.

3. Siegfried lying by Brynhild, but separated from her by the sword between them.

Finally, in both cases, the departure in search of adventures.

That, too, Siegfried (*son of the day—sun-god*) and the Walkyre Brynhild (the *nourishing earth*, spell-bound in *night* and *winter*) takes us back to the primeval myth of the marriage of Wotan with Freyja, is at once apparent.

6. *Orgeluse*, in combination with Klinschor, is the *seductress* of Anfortas, who, while combating for her, is wounded by the poisoned spear, which breaks. Wolfram, 479: *Ein ritt der König allein (den Seinen allen schuf es Pein) aus nach Abenteuer: Minne sollte ihm Freude steuern, denn noch zwang ihn Minne sehr. Mit einem giftigen Speer ward er in einer Tjost (Zweikampf) so wund, dass er nimmermehr gesund wird* —

— *Ein Heide (Klinschor) war's, der mit ihm stritt.*¶ The Graal King, Frimutel, Anfortas's father, had succumbed to a similar fate. Wolfram, 251: *Auch gab ihm eine Tjost den Tod, den ihm die Minne bot.*** In Wagner we find Anfortas's sufferings through Kundry's blandishments represented again in Klingsor's flower-grove.††

* From *Bayreuther Blätter*.

† "Then the valiant warrior kissed her; both their mouths were red. The Queen offered him her hand; she led Herr Parzival in. They sat down together.—So sat the Lady of the Land, as, refreshed by the sweet dew, the rose sends forth from out its tender skin a wealth of fresh brilliancy, white and red at the same time! This caused the guest great trouble."

‡ "Low sobbing."

|| "He whom they called the Red Knight left the Queen her virginity."

§ Simrock.

¶ "Once the King (to the great grief of all his followers) rode out alone in search of adventures; love was to bring him joy, for love pressed him sorely. With a poisoned spear he was wounded in a duel so badly, that he was never well again.— — It was Klinschor (a heathen) who fought with him."

** "He also found death in a duel, and love was the cause."

†† The reader will, no doubt, have observed that the name of the Graal-King is printed sometimes "Anfortas," and sometimes "Anfortas." We do not attempt to explain the discrepancy, but follow faithfully Herr Löffler's own spelling.—J. V. B.

In the poem of Chrétien de Troyes, Frimutel's beloved is *Floramyne*, daughter of *Flordiprinze* and of *Albafloia*, in the country of *Flordibale*.—In connection with these floral names, we must mention that Heinrich von dem Türlin in *der Aventure Krone* tells us that: *Gavan* was sent to gather a wreath in a meadow where *flowers* grew with a wonderful youth-restoring power. His good steed bore him safely, though with immense difficulty, over the broad, deep stream. On entering the meadow, however, Gavan felt so stupefied by the scent of the flowers, that he fell, drunk with sleep, time after time, to the ground. *He then*, in order to keep awake, *ran his spear through his foot*, and this did him good. When, after plucking the flowers, and twining them into garlands, he was riding back, *Giromelanz* (*Gramoflanz*) who guarded the meadow, came rushing up and insisted on fighting with him.—In Wolfram's epic, *Orgeluse* promises her love to this same Gavan, if he will bring her a *wreath* from the tree guarded by King *Gramoflanz* in *Klingsor's* wood. Then come the ride over the river and the meeting with *Gramoflanz*, who, however, being accustomed only to have to do with two, considers it beneath his dignity to fight with the intruder.—In Klinschor's castle, Gavan has to kiss the *virgins* held captive there, goes through the adventure in the miraculous bed, and, next morning, discovers in the keep a lofty column which reflects everything that occurs within a radius of six miles.* In the column he beholds *Orgeluse*, and is smitten with a fierce passion for her.

These comparisons, with *Orgeluse* as their central point, have been instituted, because from them we get the story of the second act of Wagner's *Parsifal*. All these component parts of the Parzival epic grouped round *Orgeluse* are remains of myths.—In her relations with Anfortas and Gavan, she is referable to the *Gerda* myth: *Freyr setzte sich auf Hlidskialf; den Hochsitz Odins, und sah von ihm hinab in alle Welten. Da sah er nach Norden blickend in einem Gehege ein grosses und schönes Haus; zu diesem Hause ging ein Mädchen, und als sie die Hände erhob, um die Thüre zu öffnen, da leuchteten von ihren Armen Luft und Wasser, und alle Welten strahlten von ihr wieder. Und so rüchte sich seine Vermissenheit an ihm, sich an diese heilige Stätte zu setzen, dass er harmvoll hinwegging. Und als er heimkam, sprach er nicht, und Niemand wagte, das Wort an ihn zu richten.*‡ When Skirnir (his servant) was charged to enquire what grieved him, Freyr replied that he had seen a beautiful woman, that it was on her account he was so mournful, and that he did not wish to live any longer unless she became his. Skirnir was despatched as wooer, stipulating, however, that he should have Freyr's *sword*, which was so good that it fought by itself. He obtained from the maiden a promise that at the expiration of *nine nights* she would come to the spot called *Barri* (the Wood of Silent Ways), and celebrate her marriage with Freyr.—*Orgeluse* answers to *Gerda*, while Anfortas and Gavan are merged into Freyr. The *Reflecting Column* in Klinschor's keep, in which column everything within a radius of six miles§ can be seen, and in which the image of *Orgeluse* is presented to Gavan, is *Hlidskialf*,|| Odin's lofty abode, whence Freyr looks down over the whole world and beholds the beauteous *Gerda*. The sacrifice of Freyr's sword is represented in Wagner's *Parsifal* by Anfortas's losing the sacred spear to Klingsor, through his passion for Kundry. In *Skirnir's* for, one of the most beautiful *Edda* poems, which further develops this myth, *Gerda's* hall is surrounded by a flickering flame, a hedge, and furious dogs. We meet this *Waberlohe* ("ever-quivering blaze") twice in the *Sigur* saga; the counterpart of this and of the hedge is in the fairy tale of

* German miles, of course.—J. V. B.

† "The quivering twitching Lid, the aperture in the clouds which appears and disappears when the sun is shining down on it. *Skialf* is connected with *Schilf*" [a reed] ("Something Tremulous) and with *schielen* (*schließen*)" [to leer, ogle], "to twitch, to roll the eyes.—H. v. W."

‡ "Freyr placed himself on Hlidskialf, Odin's lofty abode, and looked down thence over the whole world. As he was gazing northwards, he beheld inside a hedge a large and beautiful house; to this house a Maiden was advancing, and, as she raised her hand to open the door, air and water shone from her arms, and all the world glistened with her. And his audacity in seating himself on the holy spot was punished by his going away full of heavy sorrow. And, when he went home, he did not speak, and no one dared address a word to him."

§ German miles, as above.—J. V. B.

|| Spelt by Herr Löffler, a few lines above, "*Hlidskialf*."—J. V. B.

Dornröschen (*The Sleeping Beauty*) the hedge of thorns. According to Grimm, it is the funeral pile, with intertwined thorns, at the cremation of corpses. *Reiten durch Wafurlogi bedeutet im Mythos nichts anderes als die Schrecken des Todes besiegen und in die Unterwelt hinabsteigen. Das ist die höchste Aufgabe, welche Göttern und Helden gestellt zu werden pflegt.**—There is no doubt that it is the nether world to which Gerda is banished that connects the myth concerning her with that relating to Idun. Gerda appears, according to it, as the earth bound captive in winter under ice and snow. Freyr's servant, Skirnir, that is, the *Schier* (light) maker, the brightener, is commissioned to deliver her from the spell and to restore her to the vivifying influence of the light and of the warmth of the sun. Her union with Freyr then takes place in the grove of Barri—that is, the grove of blossoms, or, in spring, long after Freyr has subdued the blustering and stormy winds previously represented as furious dogs. (Simrock, *Myth*, § 30.)

Gavan's adventure, also, with the wreath of flowers, causing him to cross a stream, reminds us of the ferryman of the dead in our fairy-tales and of Thor's journey to Geirrödgard (Winter's Home, Nether World), during which he waded through the Wimur, the greatest of rivers.—Thus, all the myths entering into Wolfram's epic are directed to the winter solstice, and to the awakening of the spring and of the flowers—a relation suggested by the names themselves in the French *Kondwiramur-Blanche-fleur*, in Frimutel's beloved *Floramyne*, in the royal couple *Floridrinze* and *Albafora*, and in the land of *Floridibale*—or to the summer solstice, the decay of the earth's green garment and of the world of flowers (*Herseleide* and *Ganureit*, the wounding of *Anfortas*, the piercing of *Gavan's* feet with a spear).

The four Queens and 400 virgins detained as captives in Klingschor's castle are changed in Wagner to a great many flower-maidens, who, while each vaunting the superiority of her own charms, play around Parsifal (Sun-hero, spring and flower-awakener), when he forces his way into the place; while, lastly, as their chieftainess, Kundry continues, and brings to a deeply moving termination, the scene of Parsifal's temptation, after which the enchanted castle sinks through the ground.—For all this there are numerous legendary authorities.

The four Queens in Klingschor's castle are compounded of the three holy virgins, who appear in many German sagas, and of *Saint Urula* (Urachel).

The three holy virgins themselves are the reflex of the three Norns, *Urd*, *Werdandi*, and *Skuld*, as is evident from the following sagas.

In chapter 158 of the *Nial's Saga*, *Dörrudr* perceives through a fissure in the rock some women singing as they sit weaving, with human heads for counterweights, entrails for yarn and web, swords for spools, and darts for combs. In their weird-like song they describe themselves as *Valkyriur* (Walkyres), &c. At last they tear up what they have woven and mount their horses, six of them riding towards the south, and six towards the north. (Grimm.)—Near Kissingen in *Lower Franconia* stood the stronghold of *Botenlauben* where once three sisters sank through the earth. They showed themselves from time to time: two, as white as chalk; the third half white and half black, with a goat's foot. The two only were good; the black one was bad; at christenings the latter was always evilly disposed to the child. They attended, also, marriages and funerals; they even took part in war, rode on horseback, and did more than the heroes. They are the Norns, who select the destinies of men, and the *Walkyres*, who range over the field of battle, all of them springing as separate varieties from *Hel*.—A Silesian saga of the *Goldenen Eck* (small town of *Ziegenhals*) mentions three sisters in a castle, two of whom cheated the other, who was blind, when they were sharing their gold, whereupon the castle with the two false sisters sank through the earth.—On a hill overlooking the *Kochel Lake*, there is said once to have been a convent, inhabited by three virgins, two being white, and the third black, wearing a white veil and accompanied by a little dog. In the hill near *Schlehdorf*, there was a vein of gold belonging to them. From their chapel they stretched a rope, the

Norn's rope, to a lofty rock, named *Fesch*, which was an hour's journey distant and situate near *Ohlstadt*. (Panzer, *Beiträge z. Myth.*)*

(To be continued.)

SCRAPS FROM PARIS.

(Correspondence.)

At the Grand Opera *Mdlle Krauss* has re-appeared, after six weeks' holiday, as *Valentine* in *Les Huguenots*, so that the speedy production of *M. Gounod's Polyeucte* may at length be expected. Meanwhile *Hamlet* is being actively rehearsed for *M. Bouhy*, who is to replace *M. Faure*. *Mdme Carvalho* will be succeeded, as *Ophelia*, by *Mdlle Daram*, and *Mdme Gueymard* as the Queen, by *Mdlle Bloch*. *Laertes*, the King, and the Ghost, are assigned to *MM. Bosquin*, *Menu*, and *Bataille*. Should his health permit, *M. Charles Lamoureux* will conduct.—At the Opéra-Comique *Mignon* is to be revived for *Mdme Galli-Marié* as the heroine, and *Mdlle Isaac* as *Philine*.—At the Théâtre-Lyrique, the promised French version of *Aida* has been given, with the following cast: *Aida*, *Mdlle Ambre*; *Amneris*, *Mdme Bernerdi*; *Rhadamès*, *M. Nouvelli*; *Amonasro*, *M. Aubert*; *Ramphis*, *M. Ponsard*; the King, *M. Queyret*; and the Messenger, *M. Colomb*. As most persons are aware, the libretto was originally written by *M. du Locle* in French, and then translated into Italian by *Sig. Ghizlanzoni*. It was necessary for the performances at the Théâtre-Lyrique to re-translate into French this Italian edition, which had, of course, preserved nothing of the prosody of the first poem, and *M. Nutter* was charged with the task. The theatre was to open every evening after the production of *Verdi's* opera, which would alternate with *Le Capitaine Fracasse*; but this arrangement cannot be carried out for three weeks or a month—if then. The reason is the disappearance of *Le Capitaine Fracasse* from the bills, an event not unexpected by sensible and impartial judges, but one calculated to dismay those who advocate a third lyric theatre in the French capital. Some remarks made on the subject by *M. H. Moreno* in the *Ménestrel* are worth citing:—

"The Exhibition season should have opened with *Aida*, so as to make certain of a series of remunerative performances. This might have ensured the present and the future of the theatre. Young composers should remember that, if they wish their favourite theatre to live, they must assign a large place to masterpieces, ancient and modern, no matter whence taken. It is only under their auspices that the Young School will be enabled to bring out their own compositions with any chance of success. To the Young School belong the off-nights; let them distinguish themselves on such nights, and make them more popular than the others."

Mdlle Sanz, still suffering from the effects of her carriage accident, has returned from *Aix-les-Bains*. *M. and Mdme Marchesi* are expected from *Vienna* next month.—The Academy of Fine Arts has entered into possession of the 6,000 francs' annuity, bequeathed it by *Rossini*. The following official notification has been made:—

"French artists are invited to compete in the production of a new poetic work, to be set to music in conformity with the conditions laid down by the testator. The author of the musical lyric or religious composition must devote his principal attention to the melody. The author of the words to which the music is to be fitted, and to which it must be thoroughly appropriate, will be bound to observe the laws of morality. Manuscripts must be left at the secretary's office of the Academy before the 30th November,

* Compare the South German children's rhymes: "Ritti reite Rüssli—z' Bode stoh't e Schlüssli, z' Bode stoh't e guld' s' Hus,—es laugend e'ri Jung-fraun drus, die Erst spinnt side (gossamer!), die ander schnezzlet Chride (snow!), die dritte goht zum Sunnebus—und loht die heilig Sonnen us. Sunne, Sunne, chum bald wieder, Schatte, Schatte, leg di nieder." Furthermore the children's rhymes about *Pressburg*: 1. "Eins spinnt Seiden—eins wickelt Weiden—die andre geht ans Brünchen—findet ein goldig Kindechen (young sun)." 2. "Liebi Frau, mach's Thür auf—lass die liebi Sunn herauf, lass in Regen drina,—lass in Schnee verbrina! Sunn, Sunn, kummt!—Die Engelein fallen in Brunn." And the children's rhymes in the *Orlagau* (*Püssneck*): 1. "Ringe, ringe, reihe, es sind der Kinder dreie: Steigen wir auf den Hollerbusch" (*Holda's tree*), "schreiben alle husch, husch, husch." 2. "Wer will durch das Rosenthor, Der komm' her und tritt hervor: Seid ihr klug, seid ihr fein—sollt ihr Rosenjungfrau sein." 3. "Hier ist der Schlüssel zum Garten, worauf drei Jungfrauen warten; &c."

* "The ride through *Wafurlogi* signifies in the myth nothing more nor less than the act of triumphing over the terrors of death and of descending to the lower world. This is the highest task usually imposed on gods and heroes."

1878. The decision will be pronounced on the 31st December following. The author of the poem considered conforming most nearly with the terms of the competition will receive a prize representing the half of 6,000 francs, that is to say, 3,000 francs. On the 1st January, 1879, candidates will be at liberty to compete in adapting to music the prize poem. A copy of the latter will be delivered to all composers who apply. The competition closes on the 30th September, 1879, and the verdict will be made known within three months, the author of the prize composition receiving the other half of the legacy, namely, 3,000 francs. The prize composition will be performed, either at the Institute or at the Conservatory, within two months from the publication of the decision of the judges. The competitions, alternating as above, will recur periodically at the same intervals—one every nine months, while a performance of the complete work will take place every eighteen months. The only conditions obligatory on the competitors are those laid down by the testator. It is, however, desirable that the works to be set to music should approach as nearly as possible, with regard to length, the programme adopted for the *Prix de Rome*.

—The Scandinavian concert at the Trocadéro was one of the greatest successes of the Exhibition. The *Salle des Fêtes*, in which it took place, was crowded. The concert-givers were 100 students from Upsala and 60 from Christiania, the former under the conductorship of M. Hedenblad; the second under that of M. Behrens. They form part of two choral societies, consisting exclusively of graduates or undergraduates of one or other of the universities. A pamphlet containing much interesting information relating to these young Northmen was circulated among the audience. It gave a history of the two societies, some details concerning Scandinavian music, brief notices of the principal Swedish and Norwegian musicians who have turned their attention to choral writing, and the words, with translation, of several of the pieces in the programme. Seven choruses were encored out of fourteen. Each society gave some pieces alone, the two uniting in four pieces, each conductor directing two.* The Swedes gave a second concert, but without their Norwegian colleagues, whose arrangements did not permit them to stay.—M. Barbedette, one of the leading contributors to *Le Ménestrel*, has been elected Deputy for La Rochelle.

—o— WAIFS.

Mdme Christine Nilsson is at present in Paris. Her sojourn at Mont d'Or has proved highly beneficial. Most exaggerated accounts are afloat with regard to her losses in America. She has no intention of going to the United States during the forthcoming winter. Her English provincial tour begins near the end of September.

M. Naudin is singing at the Politeama, Genoa.

Signor Schira has been reposing for a time at Milan.

It is proposed to erect a monument to Cimarosa, in his native place, Aversa.

A marble bust of Schubert will shortly be inaugurated in the Liederhalle, Stuttgart.

Francesco Pacini, brother of Giovanni Pacini, composer of *Saffo*, died lately at Viareggio.

Herr Paul von Schlözer has accepted a professorship in the St Petersburg Conservatory.

Ole Bull is giving concerts with Moritz Strakosch and Mdle Stella Faustina in Norway.

Signor Usiglio will shortly leave Milan for Madrid, being engaged as conductor at the Teatro Real.

The Regensburg Madrigal Society starts shortly on a concert tour through Southern Austria and Switzerland.

The increase of pupils at the Dresden Conservatory has necessitated an augmentation of the professional staff.

Herr Franz Nachbaur, in the armour presented him by the King of Bavaria, has appeared at Gratz as Lohengrin.

M. Massenet's *Roi de Lahore* will be performed during the ensuing season at Bologna, with Signor Faccio as conductor.

Mr J. L. Toole started for his provincial tour on Monday, and was to perform at Bristol on the evening of that day.

* We had all this at St James's Hall, in the Summer of 1876. The Swedish singers only seem to know a certain number of pieces.—D. P.

Last night Miss Josephine Lawrence played Sterndale Bennett's fourth pianoforte concerto at the concerts of the Messrs Gatti.

The musical amateurs of Turin have presented Signor Pedrotti, conductor of the Turin orchestra, with a valuable conducting-stick.

Mdme Caroline Salla is engaged for the winter season to Signor Merelli, who has already accepted an engagement for her at Moscow and St Petersburg.

Signor Giuseppe Vaninetti, bandmaster of the 77th Italian regiment of the line, has been selected to compose Charles Albert's *Funeral Mass* for 1879.

Princess Mary of Teck, the Duke of Teck, and Earl Beaconsfield, K.G., attended the performance of *H.M.S. Pinafore* on Tuesday evening at the Opera Comique.

There is a question at the present moment of re-commencing the work of the new theatre on the Thames Embankment, but nothing, as yet, has been decidedly settled.

Mdme Gerster Gardini has not yet signed, we believe, with Mr Mapleson for his season in America. The engagement, however, will, in all probability, be definitively arranged.

Mr Henry Irving is about to give a series of performances in the country, during which *Louis XI.* will be a constant feature. Let us hope that the inimitable "Jingle" may not be wanting as a reviving contrast.

Miss Cari, the American contralto, about whom so much is said, was one of the company at Drury Lane Theatre, when Her Majesty's Opera was under the direction of Mr George Wood, in the season of 1870—a memorable season in all respects.

EPICIDEUM.*

I.
Beside a rugged garden wall there grew,
There grew a tender flower, beautiful in hue;
Bright was the bud array'd in skylight sheen,
Its fragrance sweet, and though almost unseen,
All lov'd the plant, and near it all would lean.
A stormy blast swept by against the wall,
And that sweet flower was crushed beneath its fall.
I saw the crash, and Oh, I would have wept,
Upon the tomb where that poor violet slept.

II.
A strain of music floated on the air,
Attracting all who heard it—so strangely rare.
Vibrating gently with a holy tone,
Familiar to angelic ones alone;
The choirs of Heaven such melodies might own.
A little while the sound was wafted o'er,
And then it ceas'd, and it was heard no more;
Its last note awoke in me a sigh,
I sorrow'd that such melody should die.

III.
A precious gem is smitten down, indeed,
Upon her grave may there no tangled weed—
But lovely flowers with their silken leaves,
May watch around, and each, like one who grieves,
Bow down its head, while every petal heaves,
And sprites invisible above her grave
May sing the music that on earth she gave:
For all her life was like that holy strain,
We seldom hear, and may not hear again.

IV.
Upon her pillow with a faded cheek,
Her youthful form enfeebled, wasted, weak,
She lay in anguish, whilst beside her bent,
Old age in sorrow watching most intent,
Their eyes all tearful, and their hearts all rent.
"I'm happy," with her last expiring breath,
She cried, "My Saviour! Thou has conquered death!
Oh, hearken! angels call." She raised her head,
Then fell aback, and they wept o'er the dead!

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BUENOS AYRES.—The Government have suppressed the annual grant hitherto made to the Conservatory. The authorities of the institution have abolished in consequence all gratuitous instruction, and fixed the sum to be paid every year by each pupil at 50 pesos. The students, numbering above 300, have accepted the new order of things, so that the institution goes on as usual.—The Quartet Society recently gave its sixty-ninth Concert of Classical Music.

DRESDEN.—A collection of Hindoo musical instruments and writings on musical subjects has been presented to the Royal Museum by the Rajah Sourindro Mohun of Tagore, who made last year a similar gift to the Museum at Brussels.

LEIPZIG.—At the recent general meeting of the Society of German Dramatic Authors and Composers, it was stated that the Society, which began with 100, now numbers 323 members, and has secured author's rights for 3,081 works.

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